

INTL 4455	Violent Political Conflict	Fall 2020
T/TR 9:35-10:50	Baldwin Hall 311	Pre/Corequisites: none
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Office hours: By appointment	Office: 319 International Affairs Building	

Course Description

This course examines a broad range of topics related to political violence. Its primary focus is “internal” political violence, meaning we will not read much about international conflict and war. For the most part, we will read about and discuss violent political events that take place in the context of a dispute between a country’s national government and individuals or groups that live in that country. Topics covered include state formation, civil war, mass protest and rebellion, ethnic conflict, terrorism, state violence, and genocide. From time to time you will encounter material that contains graphic discussions or depictions of violence. I will always let you know about this material beforehand.

Course Objectives

One purpose of this course is to acquire knowledge of actual violent conflicts that have taken place in the past or that are still ongoing. To this end, we will read several detailed historical and journalistic accounts of particular events. However, this is not a history course. Its main purpose is to examine violent political conflict using the tools of social science. For this purpose, we will read studies that use theoretical models intended to apply to many different events, as well as studies that use statistical analysis to look for meaningful patterns (for example, to see whether certain kinds of countries are more prone to violent conflict than others). By the end of the course you will have a better understanding of what a social science approach to studying violent conflict entails, and how it can provide useful insights into real world events.

Required Reading

There will be no textbook in this class. All readings will be available on the ELC course site or through the UGA library’s website. You are expected to read the assigned material, and it is very unlikely that you will do well in the course if you do not. Beginning August 25 there will be 1 academic article/book excerpt assigned per meeting, except review sessions and quizzes. Some readings are more difficult than others. For more difficult or technical readings, and especially those that use theoretical models or statistical analysis, I will provide a non-technical overview and summary. To make sure everything is clear, I assume that you do not know anything about the topics we cover or the concepts and research methods used in the readings, though I am sure that is not true!

To provide more context and background, the readings listed below will be accompanied by other readings and materials that are aimed at a more general audience. I will provide supplementary materials through the ELC course site, which you must use for nearly everything you will do in this course.

Course format

Per University guidelines, only 15 students are permitted to be in the room at once.* This means roughly two thirds of the class will not be able to be physically present on any given day. Students will be assigned to one of three groups, and during each in-person meeting only one of these three groups will be allowed to attend class. The other two groups will attend these meetings online, but may do so asynchronously (you don't have to watch the class live, but you can if you want to). I will record each in-person meeting so that students who are unable to attend that day may watch a video later instead of logging into Zoom when class starts. I will contact you individually to let you know which group you are in. Everyone has the same number of opportunities to attend class in-person, regardless of group assignment.

I will emphasize that *no one is required to attend class*. Students may access and complete all components of this course, including participation in class discussions, online through the ELC course site. To ensure that students' experiences in the course are as uniform as possible, for each topic I will provide the entire class with materials similar to what you would encounter in an online course. Students who attend in-person meetings are expected to read all of the online material before coming to class. In-person meetings will provide an opportunity to review and discuss the course readings and online materials.

Note that several of our meetings *before* Thanksgiving break are entirely online, and after Thanksgiving they will all be online. These meetings will all be asynchronous. The course schedule below indicates whether a class meeting is in-person or online.

Grades

Your final grade will be determined as follows:

Discussion participation (5): 7% each

Quizzes (3): 15% each

Final Exam: 20%

Grade Distribution (note that I do not assign minus grades):

90 - 100: A
86 - 89: B+ 80 - 85: B
76 - 79: C+ 70 - 75: C
66 - 69: D+ 60 - 65: D
below 60: F

Class Discussion

During the course of the semester you will participate in 5 discussions. Beginning and end dates and times for class discussions appear on the schedule below. Discussion forums on the course website will open and close on those dates and times. Students may earn credit by participating in the discussion in-person (when possible) or online. Discussions will rely on the readings listed below

*Also, everyone who is in the room must wear a face covering and remain at least 6 feet from everyone else at all times. See the "COVID-19 Information for Students" section at the end of the syllabus.

and the online materials I will put on the course site (news reports, videos, etc). You are expected to read or watch any and all material I provide before participating. I will always provide context and questions to facilitate discussion, and will be an active participant in online discussions. Your grades will be determined by the frequency and quality of your participation.

Quizzes

There are 3 quizzes in this course. Quizzes will consist of 3-5 broad, open ended questions to which you will provide a written response (no multiple choice). You may write as much as you would like in response to each question, but there is no required length. Your responses should be thorough but concise, and should clearly demonstrate that you have read and understand the material. If these requirements seem too ambiguous, I would recommend writing at least 3 paragraphs that each consist of at least 5 sentences. Students will receive quiz grades via email before the day the next quiz takes place.

Quizzes will be completed online through the ELC course site. The quiz schedule is as follows:

Quiz 1: Thursday, September 17

Quiz 2: Tuesday, October 13

Quiz 3: Thursday, November 12

On each of these dates an online quiz will be available beginning at 8 a.m. and will close at 8 p.m. There are no time restrictions once you begin the quiz, other than the 8 p.m. deadline.

Final Exam

The final exam will be online and will take place at the date and time indicated below. The format of the exam will be the same as the quizzes described above.

Course Website

The course website can be accessed through elc.uga.edu. You will need to use this site to access the syllabus, course readings that are not available through the library's website, online course materials, discussion forums, and quizzes.

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a plan for the course, and we may deviate from it. I will clearly communicate to students any changes that become necessary, and will do so in a timely manner.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations in order to participate in course activities or meet course requirements should contact the instructor or designate during regular

office hours or by appointment.

University Honor Code/Academic Honesty Policy

As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University's academic honesty policy, "A Culture of Honesty," and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards described in "A Culture of Honesty" found at www.uga.edu/honesty. Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.

Withdrawal Policy

Students who withdraw from the class before the withdrawal deadline of October 27 will be assigned a grade based on their performance (pass/fail) in the class up to the point of withdrawal. This means that students who are failing will be assigned a "WF" grade even if they withdraw before the deadline. The university automatically assigns a "WF" grade upon withdrawal to students who withdraw from a class after the withdrawal deadline.

Reading and Assignment Schedule

For each meeting, please note which group (A, B, or C) may attend in-person, and which meetings are entirely online (no one may attend).

1 States as violent organizations

Aug 20: Syllabus review, class overview. No reading.*

Aug 25: Tilly, Charles. 1985. "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime." in Theda Skocpol (ed.) *Bringing the State Back In.*, Cambridge Press. (Group A may attend in-person)

Aug 27: Callimachi, Rukmini. The ISIS Files: When Terrorists Run City Hall. New York Times, April 4, 2018. ([link](#)) (Group B may attend in-person)

Discussion 1 begins Aug 27 at 9:30 a.m.

Discussion 1 ends Aug 31 at 8:00 p.m.

Sep 1: Gurr, T.R. 1988. "War, Revolution, and the Growth of the Coercive State." *Comparative Political Studies* 21: 45-65. (Group C may attend in-person)

2 Coordination and Collective Action Problems

Sep 3: Little, Daniel. 1991. *Varieties of Social Explanation.* Westview Press, chap 3. (Group A)

Sep 8: Weingast, Barry. 1997. "The Political Foundations of Democracy and the Rule of Law." *American Political Science Review* 91: 245-263. (Group B)

*Class meets online

Sep 10: Kuran, Timur. 1991. "Now out of Never: The Element of Surprise in the East European Revolution of 1989." *World Politics* 44: 7-48. (Group C)

Sep 15: Review session, no reading. (Group A)

Sep 17: Quiz 1 (Group B)

3 Civil War

Sep 22: Horne, Alistair. 2006 [1977]. *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria 1954-1962*. Excerpts from pages 23-74.*

Discussion 1 begins Sep 22 at 9:30 a.m.

Sep 24: Fearon, James and David Laitin. 2003. "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War." *American Political Science Review* 97: 75-90. (Group C)

Discussion 2 ends Sep 25 at 8:00 p.m.

Sep 29: Kalyvas, Stathis N. 2001. "New and Old Civil Wars: A Valid Distinction?" *World Politics* 54(1): 99-118. (Group A)

Oct 1: Cederman, Lars-Erik, Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, and Halvard Buhaug. 2013. *Inequality, Grievances, and Civil War*. Cambridge University Press. Chapters 3 and 4. (Group B)

Oct 6: Walter, Barbara. 1997. "The Critical Barrier to Civil War Settlement." *International Organization* 51: 335-364.*

Oct 8: Review session, no reading*

Oct 13: Quiz 2 (Group C)

4 Ethnic Conflict

Oct 15: Mueller, John. 2000. "The Banality of Ethnic War." *International Security* 25: 42-70. (Group A)

Discussion 3 begins Oct 15 at 9:30 a.m.

Oct 20: Fearon, James, and David Laitin. 2000. "Violence and the Social Construction of Ethnic Identity." *International Organization* 54: 845-877.*

Discussion 3 ends Oct 20 at 8:00 p.m.

5 Terrorism

Oct 22: Horne, Alistair. 2006 [1977]. *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria 1954-1962*. Excerpts from pages 78-188. (Group B)

Discussion 4 begins Oct 22 at 9:30 a.m.

Oct 27: Stohl, Michael. 1983. "Demystifying Terrorism." In Michael Stohl (ed.) *The Politics of Terrorism*. Marcel Dekker. Pages. 1-19. (Group C)

Discussion 4 ends Oct 28 at 8:00 p.m.

*Class meets online

6 State Violence in Democracies

Oct 29: Horne, Alistair. 2006 [1977]. *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria 1954-1962*. Excerpts from pages 190-207. (Group A)

Nov 3: Watch documentary “[Standard Operating Procedure](#)”*

Discussion 5 begins Nov 3 at 9:30 a.m.

Nov 5: Rejali, Darius. 2007. *Torture and Democracy*. Princeton University Press. Chapter 2. (Group B)

Discussion 5 closes Nov 6 at 8:00 p.m.

Nov 10: Review session, no reading (Group C)

Nov 12: Quiz 3 (Group A)

7 Genocide (and predicting large-scale violence)

Nov 17: Brief introduction to the Genocide Convention by William Schabbas ([link](#)). (Group B)

Nov 19: Harff, Barbara. 2003. “No Lessons Learned from the Holocaust: Assessing Risks of Genocide and Political Mass Murder since 1955.” *American Political Science Review* 97: 57-74 (Group C)

Nov 24: Ward, Michael D., Brian D. Greenhill, and Kristin M. Bakke. 2010. “The Perils of Policy by p-value: Predicting Civil Conflicts.” *Journal of Peace Research* 47(4): 363-375.*

Nov 25-27: Thanksgiving break

8 International Human Rights Law

Dec 1: Hathaway, Oona. 2002. “Do Human Rights Treaties Make a Difference?” *Yale Law Journal* 111, skim.*

Dec 3: Vreeland, James Raymond. 2008. “Political Institutions and Human Rights: Why Dictatorships Enter Into the United Nations Convention Against Torture.” *International Organization* 62 (1): 65-101.*

Dec 8: Review session for final exam, no reading*

Dec 17: Final Exam (online) 8:00 - 11:00 a.m.

COVID-19 Information for Students

Face Coverings

Effective July 15, 2020, the University of Georgia (along with all University System of Georgia (USG) institutions) requires all faculty, staff, students and visitors to wear an appropriate face covering while inside campus facilities/buildings where six feet social distancing may not always be possible. Face covering use is in addition to and is not a substitute for social distancing.

*Class meets online

Anyone not using a face covering when required will be asked to wear one or must leave the area. Reasonable accommodations may be made for those who are unable to wear a face covering for documented health reasons. Students seeking an accommodation related to face coverings should contact Disability Services at <https://drc.uga.edu/>.

DawgCheck

Please perform a quick symptom check each weekday on DawgCheck on the UGA app or website—whether you feel sick or not. It will help health providers monitor the health situation on campus: <https://dawgcheck.uga.edu/>

What do I do if I have symptoms?

Students showing symptoms should self-isolate and schedule an appointment with the University Health Center by calling 706-542-1162 (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5 p.m.). Please DO NOT walk-in. For emergencies and after-hours care, see <https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>.

What do I do if I am notified that I have been exposed?

Students who learn they have been directly exposed to COVID-19 but are not showing symptoms should self-quarantine for 14 days consistent with Department of Public Health (DPH) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines. Please correspond with your instructor via email, with a cc: to Student Care & Outreach at sco@uga.edu, to coordinate continuing your coursework while self-quarantined. If you develop symptoms, you should contact the University Health Center to make an appointment to be tested. You should continue to monitor your symptoms daily on DawgCheck.

How do I get a test?

Students who are demonstrating symptoms of COVID-19 should call the University Health Center. UHC is offering testing by appointment for students; appointments may be booked by calling 706-542-1162.

UGA will also be recruiting asymptomatic students to participate in surveillance tests. Students living in residence halls, Greek housing and off-campus apartment complexes are encouraged to participate.

What do I do if I test positive?

Any student with a positive COVID-19 test is required to report the test in DawgCheck and should self-isolate immediately. Students should not attend classes in-person until the isolation period is completed. Once you report the positive test through DawgCheck, UGA Student Care and Outreach will follow up with you.

Mental Health and Wellness Resources:

- If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Student Care and Outreach in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-7774 or visit <https://sco.uga.edu>. They will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services.
- UGA has several resources for a student seeking mental health services (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) or crisis support (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>).
- If you need help managing stress anxiety, relationships, etc., please visit BeWellUGA (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) for a list of FREE workshops, classes, mentoring, and health coaching led by licensed clinicians and health educators in the University Health Center.
- Additional resources can be accessed through the UGA App.